

1983

Recent Events in the Middle East: Continuing Dilemmas for US Policy

M. Thomas Davis
U.S. Army

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Davis, M. Thomas (1983) "Recent Events in the Middle East: Continuing Dilemmas for US Policy," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 36 : No. 4 , Article 3.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol36/iss4/3>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

Recent Events in the Middle East: Continuing Dilemmas for US Policy

by

Captain M. Thomas Davis, US Army

The close of 1982 found the American diplomatic position in the Middle East very different from a year earlier. The year 1981 had been a difficult and unproductive year for American diplomats charged with designing and executing American Middle Eastern policy, but it had only witnessed events which confirmed previously known or suspected regional trends. The year just past, however, contained changes which could be profound. The vehicle of these changes has given the United States the opportunity to make significant progress in furthering its regional objectives, but at the same time it offers increased possibility of real disaster.

There are several factors which explain how the Reagan administration allowed this condition to develop. First, the President and his first Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, viewed the world almost exclusively from an East-West perspective. This easily translated into a pro-Israeli orientation since Jerusalem garners much of its support in the United States by portraying itself as the guardian of Western values and interests in the Middle East. In terms of policy, these predispositions were expressed in Secretary Haig's April 1981 trip to the Middle East and his fascination with the possibility of some sort of "strategic consensus," a proposal that received an understandably enthusiastic hearing from the Israeli government of Prime Minister Menachem Begin, and an equally understandable cold-shoulder from the Arab Allies envisioned as the remaining legs of any such agreement.¹

Second, was the unfamiliarity of the President with the nuances of both Middle Eastern history and politics. The President's comments during the 1980 Presidential campaign and immediately after his election revealed only the barest knowledge about the vital issues facing the region. This was the contributing ingredient to the third factor, the apparent Israeli perception that Washington under Reagan and Haig would be more agreeable to Jerusalem's aggressive pursuit of policies and actions that furthered narrow Israeli interests.

These three factors quickly combined to fossilize the already troubled autonomy talks being conducted by Israel, Egypt, and the United States,

which were designed to complete the last phase of the Camp David process by providing "full autonomy" to the Arab inhabitants of the occupied territories. The talks had stalled over the disagreements about the scope of self-government that "autonomy" allowed and the Carter administration's unwillingness to break the deadlock during the election year. The talks clearly needed a major thrust from Washington, but none came from the new administration which did not even appoint a full-time negotiator to replace Ambassador Sol Linowitz until February of 1982.

Despite this pro-Israeli inclination, several events in the administration's freshman year led it to slowly distance itself from the policies being vigorously pursued by Jerusalem. First came the April 1981 Missile Crisis in Lebanon which was soon followed by the Israeli attack on the Iraqi nuclear reactor outside Baghdad, the bombing of Beirut, the US-Israeli clash over the sale of AWACs aircraft to Saudi Arabia, the assassination of Egypt's President Anwar Sadat, and the controversial Israeli annexation of the Syrian Golan Heights in December. As 1982 began, Washington found itself with little to cheer about in the Middle East, and with increasingly strained relations with its major regional allies.

A major component of the Middle Eastern calculus in 1982 was the effect of the new Israeli government which had assumed power in August 1981. The members of the first Begin government who had served as its moderating voices, Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan and Defense Minister Ezer Weizman, had broken with Prime Minister Begin over his tough views on the shape of a general peace settlement.² Before the end of 1980, both had resigned from the government and their replacements were considerably more strident and doctrinaire on the issues central to improved Arab-Israeli relations. Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who replaced Dayan, had been opposed to the Camp David Agreement when it was first announced, and the new Defense Minister, Ariel Sharon, was a known hard-liner who had been a driving force behind the construction of the controversial new settlements on the occupied West Bank.

In an effort to work with this government, and to generate some confidence between it and the new Egyptian regime led by Sadat's successor, Hosni Mubarak, the State Department announced in February that Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Affairs Richard Fairbanks would be appointed as the new Special Negotiator for the Palestinian autonomy talks, a step that signaled the desire of Washington to go forward with the Camp David process, complete the last phase of the return of the Sinai to Egypt, and reinvigorate the autonomy process. But shortly after this move, obstacles began to appear which were the harbinger of a difficult year for American-Israeli relations.

In early March, Israel began to insist that the autonomy talks be held in Jerusalem on a rotating basis. This occurred soon after President Mubarak

had refused to include Jerusalem in his itinerary for a planned visit to Israel, a step the Israelis considered to be both foreboding and insulting. Because Egypt felt that Jerusalem itself was one of the issues to be determined in the talks, it refused to accept Jerusalem as one of the venue sites. All efforts of Washington to “finesse” this issue proved to be futile.

The creation of the venue controversy was, however, not the only danger sign noted by American policy-makers. Since the closing days of 1981, the Israelis had been building up the size of the force they had deployed along the Lebanese border. The Israelis insisted on several occasions that this military expansion was necessitated by the acquisition of modern, conventional weapons by the PLO; weapons that Israeli officials claimed would eventually be used in “provocative actions.”³ But as the Israeli buildup continued in the absence of PLO activity across the border, serious concerns began to surface that Israel was considering an invasion of Lebanon to execute the so-called Sharon plan—a strategy attributed to Defense Minister Sharon which would drive the PLO out of Lebanon and back into Jordan where they could then have a “Palestinian State” through greater participation in the government of King Hussein.⁴ By late May, the feared invasion had not come, despite some close calls in southern Lebanon and beyond,⁵ and the United States decided to take the offensive in addressing the growing logjam in the region.

Appearing in Chicago on 26 May, Secretary of State Haig delivered a speech spelling out the immediate goals of the Reagan administration in the Middle East. Specifically, the Secretary called for actions to end the war in the Persian Gulf, consummate the Camp David Agreement with a Palestinian Autonomy settlement, and end the growing turmoil in Lebanon.⁶ Plans were made to translate these broad intentions into operative realities, but it was too late. The Middle East, as Secretary Haig noted in his speech, is unforgiving “of passive policies,” and Washington had been passive for too long. On the evening of 3 June, the Israeli Ambassador to Great Britain, Shlomo Argov, was critically wounded in London by a would-be assassin. Although the PLO disavowed any involvement with the attack, Israel responded with an air strike on Beirut in an effort to damage PLO positions in the city. The Palestinians countered with a rocket attack into Northern Israel which resulted in one Israeli casualty. The following morning, Israel invaded Lebanon and the diplomatic situation in the region was completely altered.

Wars in the Middle East always test American diplomatic talents. At times, such as in 1973, the United States is able to use the conditions that follow in the wake of hostilities to further its regional interests. But the conditions of 1973 are, unfortunately, the exception and not the rule. That war was clearly launched by the Arabs after considerable planning and conclusion in both the military and economic arenas. The success enjoyed by Secretary of State Kissinger during his famous shuttle diplomacy of late 1973 and early 1974 was largely attributable to the Arab, particularly the

Egyptian, desire to have the United States exert its influence with Israel to preserve the limited Arab victory. Although many were quick to call for Secretary Haig to play a similar role in dealing with the 1982 war, the conditions were completely dissimilar.

The problem for the United States and, as it has turned out for Israel herself, is that this war was prosecuted not to end a military threat from the PLO, nor to eliminate an escalating wave of terrorist assaults on the settlements in the northern Galilee. The consensus of the observers on the scene in southern Lebanon was that the Palestinians had made every effort to avoid a confrontation with the Israelis since the establishment of the cease-fire negotiated by Ambassador Habib in July 1981. There had clearly been a buildup of the conventional strength of the Palestinian forces in southern Lebanon, an evolution which was supported with money from various Arab sources and arms funneled through Libya.⁷ The Israelis had claimed that this constituted a serious change in the power balance. Arab voices, however, especially those with reliable contacts inside the PLO command, argued that PLO leader Yasir Arafat was undertaking this buildup not because of any illusion that he could challenge Israel militarily, but because of a desire to create some semblance of military structure that he could then use to control the various groups that comprised his organization. If there was any doubt about the relative inferiority of the forces under his control, they were quickly laid to rest within the first few hours of the attack.

The actual purpose for the invasion of Lebanon was Jerusalem's desire to destroy the Palestine Liberation Organization, politically and militarily, before it could further legitimize both itself and its cause in the international community—particularly in the Western community.⁸ Since the Venice Declaration of the European powers in June 1980, which called for an association of the PLO with the peace process and the recognition of the legitimate right of the Palestinian people for self-determination, the PLO had been scoring increasingly significant victories. It had been largely successful in transforming its image from that of a gang of terrorist thugs, capable of atrocities such as that perpetuated during the Munich Olympics of 1972, to one of a reasonable and calculating organization attempting through largely diplomatic means to achieve its goal of national self-determination. There were still some rough spots reflecting the limited control that the central PLO leadership had over many of its more radical and recalcitrant members, but the general direction of Arafat's leadership had been toward moderation and accommodation. In 1974, the PLO had been acknowledged as the sole representative of the Palestinian people by the Arab league and had been granted observer status at the United Nations. Its leader had actually appeared before the UN General Assembly and received an enthusiastic welcome. Clearly, the PLO has been on the rise since 1970 when it first attracted the world's attention and focused it on the Palestinian cause, but it

was only after the Venice Declaration that the PLO began to gain ground rapidly.

During 1980 and 1981, Arafat had been actively seeking diplomatic respectability, and succeeded to a great extent. Having had warm relations with the countries of the Eastern bloc, the PLO's success in receiving full diplomatic status from the Soviet Union, East Germany, and Hungary, was of no particular significance. But Arafat was matching these gains with comparable activity in the West. He had been received by the government of Austria, had been given a lavish reception in Tokyo equaling those usually accorded by the Japanese to visiting heads of state, and had been granted full diplomatic status by the Greek government led by Socialist Premier Andreas Papandreou. This recognition reflected a growing sympathy with the ultimate goal of the PLO, mainly the acquisition of a state on the occupied West Bank and Gaza, an objective totally opposed by the Begin government for numerous reasons of which the most significant was the ideological orientation of the Likud coalition. Because of this concern, Jerusalem had initially balked at the suggestion of including Europeans in the international observer force (the MFO) which was to monitor the peace in the Sinai after the Israeli withdrawal.

A major cause of disappointment and concern in Israel was the attitude of the French. The Israeli-French relationship during the term of President Giscard d'Estaing had been strained to say the least. Giscard had adopted a very pro-Arab stance in formulating French policy in the Middle East, a development the Israelis attributed to French concern over the availability of their required oil supplies. But things were supposed to change after the election of Francois Mitterrand, a socialist who had frequently stated his preference for strong relations between Israel and France, and a more balanced policy in the Middle East as a whole. In March 1982, Mitterrand traveled to Israel becoming the first European Head of State to do so. This was supposed to herald the beginning of what Israeli Foreign Minister Shamir had labeled a "new era" in relations between the two states. But while he was in Israel, Mitterrand issued a strong and unambiguous call for Palestinian rights and the establishment of a Palestinian state, indicating his belief that this was the only way that Israel could ever hope to enjoy acceptance and peace in the Middle East.⁹ The "new era" was, therefore, very brief.

The indications of the PLO's growing respectability were by no means confined to Europe. Of greater concern to the Israelis were the unmistakable signs that this trend had spread across the Atlantic to the United States. Since the signing of the Camp David Agreement, several members of Congress had openly become advocates of American relations with the PLO. Representatives Finley of Illinois and McCloskey of California had been quite out-front in their support of a redirection of American policy, and former Senator James Abourezk of South Dakota had become a local lobbyist and proponent

for Palestinian interests.¹⁰ But for the Israelis, the real shocker came in the wake of Sadat's assassination. Returning from the Egyptian leader's funeral in Cairo, former Presidents Carter and Ford had told reporters during an impromptu news conference that the United States would have to eventually deal with the PLO. When added to an earlier statement by former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, who took the same approach, the indications that American thinking was evolving on the subject of the PLO became clear. From the Israeli perspective, the diplomatic threat posed by a PLO with international acceptability was considerably greater than the threat from a few randomly fired rockets and cannon.

As indicated by its delaying tactics on the autonomy agreement, the Begin government had no intention of allowing any meaningful autonomy to the Arab residents of the West Bank and Gaza despite the wording of the Camp David Agreement. As the Israelis continued to erect more settlements, and as they continued to propose autonomy schemes which were considerably more restrictive than anything the Arabs could possibly accept, the relations between Jerusalem, Cairo, and Washington became increasingly difficult; but for Jerusalem, controlling the rising emotions of the Arabs in the occupied territories became more difficult still.

In November 1981, Jerusalem announced that it was appointing a civilian administrator to head the Israeli agency which governed the West Bank. The local Arab leaders, fearing that this was either an Israeli plot to make their occupation appear more natural or the first step towards eventual incorporation, refused to cooperate with the new authorities. The day after the announcement, riots erupted all over the occupied territories soon to be followed with similar disturbances on the Golan after its effective annexation in December.

By March, the situation had become so serious that the civilian administrator, Menachem Milson, disbanded the town council of al-Bira on the West Bank and replaced it with a three-member military committee. Riots erupted again which the Israelis were forced to meet with increasingly harsh measures. Soon the rigor of the duty began to show on the Israeli Security Forces. General Danny Matt, a highly respected soldier serving as the senior Israeli officer in charge of the occupied territories, had resigned in November after the new policies were announced; by May, reservists upset with the severity of the rule they had to enforce began to publicly object to the government's policies in the territories.¹¹ Recently, the new Chief of Staff of the Israeli Defense Force, General Moshe Levy, rescinded certain standing orders issued by his predecessor which instructed Israeli troops on the West Bank to deal harshly with Arab demonstrators protesting against government policies.

In late March, Milson dismissed the two most vocal and important Mayors on the West Bank, Bassam Shakka of Nablus, and Karim Khalaf of Hebron.

both men had been the victims of assassination attempts that had left them partially crippled; but despite this violence, they had persisted in their calls for Palestinian statehood and an association with the PLO. After their dismissal, Milson stated bluntly that there could be no more exercises in democracy on the West Bank until the influence of the PLO was removed. He further noted that Israel and the PLO were engaged in "a very serious struggle" and that the Palestinian organization was "illegitimate in the West Bank . . . [and] in Beirut or Paris or New York."¹² As it turned out, this was probably an ominous indication of the intentions of Jerusalem.

Thus by mid-1982, Israel was being pressured by the PLO politically and diplomatically on two fronts. Internationally, Arafat and the PLO high command were becoming more vocal, more visible, more moderate, and more acceptable to an ever increasing audience. Domestically in Israel, the costs of opposing the influence of the PLO, in terms of both money and morale, were becoming excessive. In addition, the trends in both spheres were clearly adverse. If Israel was to succeed in its plan to retain control of the territories, it clearly had to halt this increasing success of the PLO.

It is debatable whether Israel won the war. In the military sphere, it clearly outfought both the PLO and the regular Syrian forces that it faced. Perhaps as significantly, it did so with enough precision and efficiency that there was no need to call upon the United States to undertake any emergency resupply; the Israelis' American-provided stockpiles were clearly sufficient to fight the war. But in spite of this feat of arms, the PLO has survived; its members are somewhat discouraged, and its military potential is clearly lessened, but the fervor that nourishes it, Palestinian Nationalism, is still strong and the determination to fight on is still evident.¹³ Therein lies Washington's most immediate difficulty.

Unfortunately, the history of the periods following Arab-Israeli wars is very unhappy from the Western perspective. Despite its demonstrated military strengths, Israel even today lacks the power to crush its Arab opponents. It simply lacks the capacity to completely finish an enemy and impose its will; the Arab nation is too large and the Israeli state too small to effect such a conclusion. This condition has, in the past, left Western interests in the Middle East in jeopardy, and this war will likely be no different.

Following the 1956 war over the Suez, the United States found itself in diplomatic quicksand throughout the Middle East as several moderate, pro-Western governments came under pressure from social forces enflamed by the war. The stability of Lebanon and Jordan were threatened, and Iraq actually collapsed taking with it the rock upon which the United States and Britain had built the Baghdad Pact. After 1967, the reactions in the Arab world swept away the monarchy in Libya, and probably precipitated the abortive and mysterious coup attempt in Saudi Arabia.¹⁴ The last major drama was played out in Jordan during 1970 when the government of King

Hussein was forced into a bloody showdown with the radicalized Palestinian movement.

Clearly, the social force which fed these developments after 1956 and 1967 was Arab Nationalism and its manifestation in the Pan-Arab movement, the creed which advocates the unification of the various Arab countries into one large Arab state. Under this banner, an attack against one Arab, or group of Arabs, is an attack on all. But Pan-Arabism as an idea has never been able to overcome the practical barriers which have thus far prohibited Arab integration, and today many argue that it is dead as a viable pole of political thought.¹⁵ This may be the premature writing of the movement's epitaph, but clearly its appeal has lessened over the years. Nonetheless, this is no cause for joy in the West, where the Pan-Arab idea has long been a source of trouble; for even as this regional theme has declined, another has reemerged to replace it.

If there is one lesson from Iran and the collapse of the Shah, it is that the major threat to Western interests in the Middle East comes less from Soviet military intervention than from internal collapse. All Middle Eastern states are to some extent fragile creatures. Their borders are for the most part unnatural, their leaders are in many cases transplanted, and their societies are surprisingly diverse and disjointed. With the exceptions of Israel and Turkey, no Middle Eastern state has ever succeeded in having a peaceful transfer of power from one political group to another previously serving in opposition to the government. The threat of internal upheaval is greatest when a central unifying theme can combine with a negative objective. In the past the theme has been provided by the Pan-Arab idea, currently it is provided by Islamic revivalism.

In Iran the combination of resurgent Islam and hatred for the Shah provided the lethal combination that so severely damaged American interests. The power of Islamic revivalism is real and its effects have been observed far from Tehran. In Libya, Qaddafi has long advocated a return to the basics of the faith; in Saudi Arabia, the strictest of all the modern Arab states in its adherence to fundamentalist Islam, the pressures to cling even more tightly to the true path created the challenge to the ruling family evidenced by the November 1979 attack on the Grand Mosque in Mecca; and finally, in Egypt, Islamic fanatics murdered President Anwar Sadat, a leader many felt had gone too far in aligning himself with the United States.

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon, a strong action taken with insufficient justification, threatens to rekindle the anti-Western passions of the fringe groups in the Middle East. As in 1956 and 1967, the action calls into question the authority and legitimacy of the pro-Western Arab moderates who have recently invested heavily in the proposition that the only way to restrain Israeli actions is through the good offices of the United States. The validity of this hypothesis is now severely shaken. The Arab masses see the invasion as

yet another example of Israel doing as it pleases in attacking Arab lands and taking Arab lives. This perception will be heightened, and made even more dangerous, if the only real winners of this war appear to be the Israelis and the Lebanese Christians who have used it to tighten their grip on the reins of political power in Lebanon at the expense of their Muslim compatriots. In a period of escalating religious awareness, this condition could create some dangerous chemistry.

Because of the administration's passivity on the Middle East during its first two years, the United States' position now appears to be delicately balanced between opportunity and peril. In all fairness, it must be noted that the full responsibility for this condition has to be shared with the previous administration. The collapse of the Pahlavi reign in Iran and the protracted hostage crisis had created new conditions which were not fully analyzed when the Republicans swept into the White House. In addition, the Carter administration's failure to force the autonomy negotiations to conclusion during the 1980 election year allowed that initiative to stagnate. But Washington's failure since early 1981 to shape the issues of the Middle East left a vacuum, and that void was filled with an agenda designed in Jerusalem.¹⁶

President Reagan's highly regarded speech of 1 September 1982, laying out what has been now named the "Reagan Initiative," may have changed this. The President succinctly laid down the American position on three major issues. First, the United States, in qualified language, has indicated its desire and intention to deal with the Palestinian issue; second, that it accepts neither the Begin government's interpretation of "full autonomy" nor its goal for the final status of the West Bank and Gaza; and finally, that it withdraws its tacit acceptance of the Israelis settlements program, something that Jerusalem felt was its major advance from the 1980 election.

This last point, the settlements issue, is probably the key—the one issue that is going to break either Mr. Reagan or Mr. Begin. President Carter had maintained, as his negotiators made clear to Jerusalem time after time, that the legality of the settlements was questionable, but their impact on the chances for peace was not—they were an obstacle! President Reagan had stated before coming into office, that the settlements were "not illegal," a statement that Jerusalem interpreted to mean that the new American government accepted, or at least would not oppose, the expansive settlement program being vigorously pursued. That perception is now altered, but the practical implications of this change have yet to be demonstrated on the ground where Israeli settlement construction has become feverish.

The administration has charted its course, but as Secretary Shultz's shuttle effort during the spring of 1983 has demonstrated, there are serious obstacles to executing the plan. The central problem is that the United States has yet to find a way to clear the table of the agenda resulting from the invasion of

Lebanon and get to the core issue, the Palestinian problem. Despite the Secretary of State's enormous investment of time and energy to secure a withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, that goal is not yet achieved and may not be for at least another year if ever. Until progress is made in this area, there is no hope that any talks can be resumed over the autonomy plan for the West Bank and Gaza. The Israeli government would like to have an agreement with Lebanon which would provide some tangible benefit from a war that has now cost it nearly 500 killed in action, but evidently this goal is not as attractive as keeping the autonomy discussions off the table and off the front pages. Even if there is an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon under the terms of the Shultz plan, it seems certain that Jerusalem will use the concessions it made during the Lebanon negotiations as an excuse to reject demands that it next make concessions in the occupied territories.

Washington must prevent this. It must act and act soon to refocus discussions on the occupied territories. This will require some tough rhetoric, and perhaps some rough actions, but it must be done. Presently, the administration is relying exclusively on rhetoric. Numerous reports have surfaced of sharp exchanges between American negotiators and their Israeli counterparts, but neither Jerusalem nor the Arabs will take this verbal wrestling seriously unless the United States follows with substantive actions. It may be necessary, as some members of the Senate have suggested, to use the instrument of aid to force Israel to bear the full financial burden of the settlements. Although American aid does not assist in building settlements, as in the logic about the Soviet Union and the gas pipeline, foreign aid in one sector allows internal resources to be diverted for other pursuits.

The refusal of King Hussein in April 1983 to enter the autonomy talks under the banner of the Reagan plan was a clear setback for American efforts to restart discussions on the West Bank and Gaza. The failure of the King to reach a common agreement with PLO leader Arafat was an unfortunate development which was a great disservice to the Arab position. But the results must be viewed in context; even if Hussein and Arafat had agreed on a common negotiating position and objective, what would there have been to talk about with the present Israeli government which rejected the Reagan plan from the outset? It seems illogical to assume that an Israeli government which could not consummate an agreement with the friendly regime of Anwar Sadat, who had a lesser stake in the final status of the West Bank and Gaza, could reach a settlement with the King and the PLO. The problem is always the same, the Begin government simply lacks a strong desire to reach a West Bank agreement on anything close to the minimal Arab conditions. The Prime Minister's words and actions make this quite clear and the United States has made no progress in changing his thinking.

The years ahead are full of danger for the United States. We have, during the past decade, been long on promises and somewhat short on delivery when

it comes to the Middle East. Consequently, pressures are building throughout the region; a recent poll showed, for example, that over 70 percent of Egyptians are in favor of breaking relations with Israel.¹⁷ The administration must move with purpose during the coming year, for the electoral pressures of 1984 will surely move the Middle East off center stage and some of the President's potential opponents are already clamoring for more understanding of the Israeli position.¹⁸ As the late Nahum Goldmann once noted, the only reason Israel gets away with its preferred policies is that "the Americans insist on having a Presidential election every four years."¹⁹ During this period of danger after the 1982 war, it would be a critical mistake to shelve American diplomatic efforts just when they will be needed the most. The President and Secretary of State Shultz understand what must be done; their unenviable task is to rally the necessary diplomatic skill and political resolve to produce progress before it is too late.

Notes

1. See Bernard Gwertzman, "Mideast Strategy: The 1950s Revived," *The New York Times*, 13 October 1981, p. A14.

2. For a reasonably candid discussion of the alienation of Weizman from Prime Minister Begin, see Ezer Weizman, *The Battle for Peace* (New York: Bantam Books, 1981), pp. 384-388.

3. See Hedrick Smith, "U.S. Officials Fear Raid Into Lebanon," *The New York Times*, 5 March 1982, p. A2.

4. A major debate arose in Israel after the publication in *Time Magazine* of "Sharon's Plan," *Time*, 1 March 1982, p. 24. Sharon denied that he had such a plan in an appearance before the Knesset's Foreign Affairs Committee on 23 February (see *FBIS*, 24 February 1982, p. 14). Nonetheless, continuing comments by both Sharon and Begin throughout the spring gave the clear impression that an Israeli invasion of Lebanon was likely. See for example, "Begin Puts the World on Notice," *FBIS*, 24 February 1982, p. 15, and "Sharon Details 'Four Red Lines' in Match," *FBIS*, 25 February 1982, p. 13.

5. Sharon had hinted that Israel might take military action in late 1981. In January, Begin told President Reagan that there would be no attack into Lebanon without a "clear provocation." A month later, however, Israeli Ambassador to the United States Moshe Arens began to reference the PLO buildup as a provocation. Evidently, when an Israeli lieutenant was killed in Southern Lebanon during April, Washington narrowly averted an Israeli attack. After the murder of Bar-Simontov in April, Arafat said that he expected an attack within 48 hours.

6. See U.S. Department of State, "Peace and Security in the Middle East," *Current Policy*, 26 March 1982. Also see "U.S. Promises Major Effort on Palestinian Autonomy," *The New York Times*, 26 April 1982, p. A11.

7. For a discussion of the nature of the PLO military expansion, see Jack Cushman, "The PLO: A Guerrilla Force Becoming a Standing Army," *Defense Week*, 3 August 1981, pp. 6-8.

8. For a slight variation on this theme, see Harold H. Saunders, "An Israeli-Palestinian Peace," *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1982, pp. 100-121.

9. See David K. Shipler, "Mitterrand Urges Palestinian State," *The New York Times*, 5 March 1982, p. A1.

10. Abouzeck signed an open letter to the Congress calling on it to take "immediate and effective action to stop the genocidal war against Lebanon" that was distributed as a flier on the streets of Washington by the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC). Representative McCloskey and some of his House colleagues went to Beirut during the Israeli siege to meet with Arafat, but their presence served only to further confuse the diplomatic situation.

11. A dangerous trend in Israel has been the growing fissure between the Army and the Government (particularly Defense Minister Sharon). Numerous officers charged with the responsibility of carrying out governmental policy are breaking with the government over both the occupation and the invasion of Lebanon. Since the massacre of hundreds of Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatilla camps in September, dissatisfaction with Sharon has greatly escalated. Reports have circulated widely that senior commanders

in Lebanon have asked to be relieved of their duties and that many Israeli generals are asking for Sharon's resignation. See for example, David K. Shipler, "Israeli Issue: Sharon," *The New York Times*, 27 September 1982, p. A8; "Army Criticism," *FBIS*, 29 September 1982, p. 114; and "Israel Has to Accept Blame, Generals Tell Sharon," *The New York Times*, 4 October 1982, p. A6.

12. William Clairborne, "Israeli Says West Bank Election Awaits End of PLO Influence," *Washington Post*, 27 March 1982, p. A1.

13. See "Facing Drastic Choices," *Time*, 13 December 1982, pp. 36-37.

14. The truth about the 1969 coup is not fully known. Fred Halliday, in his book *Arabia Without Sultans* (New York: Vintage Books, 1975), pp. 80-81, indicates that it was a serious effort by at least two disenchanted groups to oust the House of Saud. Recently, however, other books have described the whole affair as "amateurish." See for instance, William B. Quandt, *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s* (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1981), p. 102, and Robert Lacey's recently published book, *The Kingdom* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981), pp. 380-2. The truth may never be known, but the point remains valid. Saudi Arabia is vitally important to the United States and the Western economy. Any adverse change in the political orientation of its leadership would present Washington with very difficult choices.

15. See Fouad Ajami, "The End of Pan-Arabism," *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1978/79, pp. 355-373.

16. Zbigniew Brzezinski had essentially predicted such actions in "What's Wrong With Reagan's Foreign Policy?" *The New York Times Magazine*, 6 December 1981, p. 38.

17. See "Opinion Poll on Relations With Israel," *Foreign Broadcast Information Service*, January 1983, p. D5.

18. See, for example, Ernest F. Hollings, "Israel, Despite Begin," *The New York Times*, 24 January 1983, p. A19. Senator Hollings is frequently mentioned as a possible Democratic candidate for President in 1984.

19. The late Mahum Goldmann was the former president of the World Zionist Organization and of the World Jewish Congress.

Captain M. Thomas Davis, while on the faculty of the Military Academy, spent the summer of 1982 at the State Department working for Ambassador Richard Fairbanks and is currently serving with the Second Infantry Division in Korea.



On Nuclear War

"The interest displayed by Soviet writers in the conduct of such a war, which some writers in the West find so sinister, seems to me no more than common sense. If such a war does occur, the operational and logistical problems it will pose will need to have been thoroughly thought through. It is not good enough to say that the strategy of the West is one of deterrence, or even of crisis management. It is the business of the strategist to think what to do if deterrence fails, and if Soviet strategists are doing their job and those in the West are not, it is not for us to complain about them."

By M.E. Howard, "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy," in Philip Towle, ed., *Estimating Foreign Military Power* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1982), p.268.